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Master's Thesis of Public Administration

# How to Improve Citizen Participation in Policy Process through a TV Program

TV프로그램을 활용한 정책결정 과정에서의  
시민참여 증진 방안

August 2016

Graduate School of Public Administration  
Seoul National University  
Global Public Administration Major

Park, Eugene

# **ABSTRACT**

**Park, Eugene**  
**Global Public Administration Major**  
**Graduate School of Public Administration**  
**Seoul National University**

With the development of democracy, citizen participation in policymaking procedures has been gradually promoted and enhanced in both state and local levels. According to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), the developmental stages of the citizen participation can be categorized into five phases – Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborative, and Empower. The level of influence and involvement of the citizens steadily increase with each phase moving forward, ultimately striving to enter the ideal phase of ‘Empower’ to achieve effective policies within a true participatory democracy; therefore, it is crucial to analyze and evaluate a country’s current phase in citizen participation to determine its democratic developments and trajectories. In this study, based on the characteristics of each phase as identified by IAP2, the current phase of South Korea’s citizen participation is examined as being in the initial stages of the third step ‘Involve’. There have been diverse endeavors to achieve participatory democracy, especially during the current administration of President Park Geunhye. While these attempts have made visible outcomes such as the growth of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), most of the outcomes have been geared towards unilateral administrative actions to promote such success in growth, and not truly considering the achievements (or lack thereof) in participatory contexts. As a comparative study, the following three online tools from the United States were analyzed in their effects in ensuring and enhancing active citizen participation: <We the People>, <Challenge.gov>, and

<AmericaSpeaks>. The paper will also go over the limitations of the aforementioned online democratic tools in the U.S., and further propose the potential of speech-formatted television programs as an alternative way to promote the citizen participation in policymaking procedures. Despite the increasing usage of online and mobile platforms, analysis of their communication flow shows prevailing unilateral tendencies. Hence, this study argues that television programs have the popularity, accessibility, and reliability to the public that make up for the shortages of these online tools. To show the potential role of television in citizen participation and policymaking, and how they can elevate participatory democracy in South Korea, <15 Minutes to Change the World>, a program from South Korea's Christian Broadcasting System (CBS) is provided as a case study.

**Keywords:** Civic Engagement, Citizen Participation, TV Program, Policy Process,  
The 15 Minutes to Change the World, Broadcasting

**Student number:** 2014-23719

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# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

‘Citizen Participation’ is generally defined as actions done by citizens in governmental policymaking processes as the purpose and means to exercise their influence and democratic rights. In contrast to past centralized and authoritarian governments, the term is now being actively promoted by government officials as a new keyword and essential component to successful public policy. In particular, South Korea had experienced a strong authoritarian government during the industrialization period in the 1970s, and went through a dramatic and rapid transition due to the June Democratic Uprising in 1987. After the June Democratic Uprising, it’s the policy and decision-making authority of the central government have been transferred to local governments in order to provide customized services that reflect the actual needs of local residents. Even though such policies at the local level reflected citizen concerns and needs more so than the past, the legacy of the authoritarian and centralized regime still remained. Nonetheless, both local government and citizens are recognizing the importance of participatory democracy in local self-government policies, and citizens are increasingly able to participate in the decision-making process. As public policies are enacted to enhance better quality of life for citizens, ensuring an active citizen participation in the process can guarantee legitimacy and justification on political decisions. Moreover, ensuring citizens to participate as stakeholders in the decision-making process can both elevate civic consciousness and enable policy implementation to run smoothly. Therefore, in all levels of policymaking, citizen participation is an essential and meaningful component for both state-level democratic governmental contexts and in public administrative contexts on the local level.

The current Park Administration is emphasizing on the concept of ‘Government 3.0,’ which is to integrate technology in resolving citizen concerns and other public problems. Technology is highly anticipated by the government to have the potential

to transform ‘old-fashioned’ governance and produce a more open and civically engaged political culture. Hence, the keywords for ‘Government 3.0’ are “Openness, Sharing, Communication, and Collaboration.” emphasizing on the facilitation of citizen participation. The previous ‘Government 2.0’ has advanced from the unilateral ‘Government 1.0’ by seeking interactive communications between public officials and citizens and focusing on customized public policies for individuals. To achieve these goals, a new governmental paradigm focusing on the people was highlighted and consequently the government endeavored to enlarge various communication channels to include the people in the establishment, enforcement, and evaluation of public policies.

These trends were accelerated by the rapid development of Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) and the proliferation of smart devices, such as smart phones, tablet PCs, and so on. With the increasing and expanding usage of smart devices, the communication flow between the government and the people is changing from indirect communication to a more direct one. Accordingly, policy agendas are being formulated to suit individuals and hence more customized in its establishment compared to the past. This changing paradigm is important and meaningful in that the democratic responsiveness has been enhanced on the government and public officials’ end, as the policies were enacted as a result of active communication with the people, who are the direct beneficiaries of public policy.

According to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), the level citizen participation can be categorized into five phases. The first phase is ‘Inform,’ meaning that the government provides all information and references about policies through related websites. The information may be open to the public based on the request of individual citizens or merely as an administrative strategy. The second phase is ‘Consult,’ in which the government begins to consult or discuss its policies with the citizens through a public hearing committee or by conducting a survey. The third phase is ‘Involve,’ in which the government facilitates the citizen engagement more actively in policymaking decisions by

hosting workshops or other on-site platforms for public discussion. The fourth phase is ‘Collaborative,’ which is when citizens, civic organizations, and committees are regarded as stakeholders and discussants on an equivalent level by the government. Last but not least, the final phase is ‘Empower,’ where the citizens’ decisions can heavily influence public policy and local referendums and lead to actual implementation.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborative	Empower
Objective	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on policy analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are understood and considered in a consistent manner.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making process, including the discussion of alternatives and preferred solutions by citizens.	To place final decision-making authority in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	“We will keep you informed.”	“We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and provide feedback on how the public input influenced the decision.”	“We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternative policy decisions and provide feedback on how the public input influenced such decisions.”	“We will turn to you for direct and innovative advice in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.”	“We will implement what you decide.”
Example Tools	Fact sheets Websites	Public comments	Workshops Deliberative	Citizen Advisory	Citizen Juries

	Open house	Focus groups Surveys Public meetings	poll	Committees Consensus-building Participatory decision-making	Ballots Delegated decisions
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**Table-1 International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (www.iap2.org)**

This research will analyze the process from the first phase to the third phase, and why it is important to advance to the fourth ‘collaborative’ phase, and the open communication channels that are needed between the government and the citizens to reach to that stage. Furthermore, it will look into currently existing communication channels that are being executed to implement collaborative governance, their limitations, and propose the applicability of television programs as a medium to facilitate citizen participation.

## **1.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Citizen Participation.**

In its essence, public administration has been developed for the purpose of enhancing citizen participation alongside with the development of the democracy. In other words, public administration exists to promote citizen participation and enhance the convenience and quality of life of the people. Therefore, in the public policy arena, to promote the participation of citizens is accepted as a very important task, and many scholars have researched and suggested the ways to expand such participation in the decision-making process of public policy.

Proliferation of citizen participation has several desirable results. Probably the most desirable of them all would be that, transparency and legitimacy can be achieved in the process of formulating public policies by properly and adequately applying the voices of the people. Nevertheless, citizen participation does not always lead to nor does it guarantee desirable results. There are underlying concerns that citizen participation is can also be an impediment to efficiency because the participatory process consumes much time and expenses; furthermore, the volume and variety of opinions by expanding stakeholder groups may cause

confusion and disorder in the decision-making process. Therefore, there is a need for specific deliberations about the effective methods of citizen participation in decision-making process with hopeful expectations that it would bring change on the institutional level. Irvin & Stansbury (2004) analyzed the strengths and the limitations of citizen participation as below.

	Advantages to citizen participants	Advantages to government
Decision process	Education (to inform and learn from government representatives) Persuade and enlighten government Gain skills for activist citizenship	Education (to inform and learn from citizens) Persuade citizens by building trust and alleviating anxiety or hostility Build strategic alliances Gain legitimacy of decisions
Outcomes	Gain partial authority in the policy process Better policy and implementation decisions	Avoid litigation costs Better policy and implementation decisions
	Disadvantages to citizen participants	Disadvantages to government
Decision process	Time consuming (and tedious) process Pointless, if citizens' decisions are eventually ignored	Time consuming process Costly Possibility of backfire would create more hostility towards government
Outcomes	Policy decisions heavily influenced by and skewed towards certain interest groups	Loss of decision-making authority The challenge of not being able to disregard poorly made decisions by the majority vote Less budget allocated for implementation of actual projects

**Table-2 Strengths and Weak points of Citizen Participation (Irvin & Stansbury 2004)**

On one hand, citizen participation in public policy enables people to 1) understand about policies, 2) relieve social conflicts regarding policies, and 3) support governmental decisions. On the government's end, it becomes much easier to gather public opinion, and enhance legitimacy and efficiency in the policy

implementation process. In short, the public policies as a result of such participatory process will more likely fit and reflect the actual needs of the citizens, and will therefore be enforced more efficiently due to the broad support.

On the other hand, the limitations of citizen participation have a high price to pay. The declining efficiency in policymaking is one of the most common critiques of citizen participation. To involve various stakeholders in specific policies also means much more time and costs to reach a consensus. The sheer volume and variety of stakeholder groups and opinions would cause a tiresome and tedious discussion process and conflicts among interest groups, ultimately leading to a delay in policy decisions or having a consensus made by certain elite groups with strong networks and/or financial power. This also points out the issue of rightful representation of citizens because in reality it is difficult to elicit and ensure the participation from all socioeconomic levels. Marginalized groups from mainstream society, such as the elderly, migrants, or low-income groups in general, face difficulty to come up with the time and expenses to spare for citizen participation, and they often lack the accessibility to be informed about such opportunities and social procedures. Under these circumstances, equal representation can be challenged because it cannot take into account the stances of various socioeconomic groups, and therefore legitimacy in policymaking may be undermined. Another critique of the citizen participation is that it can be misused as a mean to justify the legitimacy of public policy. In other words, citizen participation may be utilized as a tool to change or persuade the mass public opinion to the intended direction already set by the government by providing limited information on the policy issues. In addition, it can be sometimes misused as a mean for the government to avoid responsibility and place the blame elsewhere should the implemented policies cause social problems or lead to undesirable results.

Meanwhile, policymakers also face the challenges of having the policy agenda be diverted from its original purpose of collaborative governance or from the public interest in general when making the decision based on the rule of majority

vote. If the participation is manipulated by certain groups and organizations with the most networks and resources, the opinions and interests of the broader citizenry cannot be properly reflected. Thus, it is pertinent for policymakers and public officials to be aware of the populism which can distort the true meaning and integrity of the democracy.

As described above, policy decisions based on citizen participation have both positive and negative aspects; on one hand it has significance in that social consensus, political legitimacy, and support from the grassroots level can be achieved, while on the other hand there is the risk of specific elite groups influencing the decision-making process or public opinions, especially if there is an oversight and lack of mediation by policymakers. If policymakers and public officials do not manage to prevent such populism early on in the policymaking process, it will be extremely difficult to advance to the fourth phase of collaboration in citizen participation.

Based on these theoretical backgrounds, this paper will examine how to expand citizen participation in policymaking process, and will compare the contribution as well as strengths and weaknesses of online participation by comparing that in the United States and South Korea. The paper will further demonstrate and analyze the potential of television programs as an alternative medium that could overcome the limitation of online and smart phone-led participation. Television is still considered as one of the most popular channels of mass communication with a broad accessibility and reliability; therefore, it can widely deliver well-refined information by professionals as well as provide a platform for ordinary citizens to have their voices be heard. Furthermore, this paper will highlight the strengths of the speech-formatted television programs and how they are utilized to improve citizen participation through mass media.



## **2. The ‘Involve’ phase in current South Korea**

### **2.1 Citizen Participation in South Korea**

Where South Korea stands in citizen participation can be determined by the guidelines and criteria from IAP2. With the enforcement of the ‘Official Information Disclosure Act’ in 1998, South Korea entered its first phase of citizen participation (Inform). The purpose of the Act was to expand the “right to know,” and enhance the transparency in administrative operations of the government. Citizens could request to access specific information through the main governmental and affiliated websites, by visiting related institutional offices or requesting by mail; such request to accessibility is granted under approval and is not necessarily guaranteed. Limitations of the first phase are threefold: first, accessibility to information was very limited because the institutions had the powers to reject the claims if it seemed necessary to them. Second, the requesting process to access information was complicated and inconvenient, which hindered people to actively seek and utilize their rights to know. Finally, the first phase only sought unilateral communication from the government to the citizens, making them passive recipients of the government-provided information.

In the early 2000s and onwards, the South Korean Government entered the second phase of ‘Consult’ with further ICT development and the enhancement of the civic awareness in public affairs. The government began to weigh in on people’s opinions or carried out surveys and polls to collect data on public opinion on various issues. Despite the attempts to be a more inclusive democracy, it was limited in the fact that the feasibilities of listening to public opinion or conducting surveys and polls were completely dependent on the government; in other words, the opportunity for citizens to have their voices be heard in public hearings or surveys/polls would not take effect unless first initiated by the government. Sustainability and effectiveness of reflecting public opinion, therefore, were not guaranteed. Unfortunately, the current situation for citizen participation in South Korea does not seem to have improved much from this second phase. The

government still utilizes public hearings or polls as the way to gather public opinion, which severely limits when, and what people can express and also to what extent they can be reflected or influence policymaking processes. Therefore, it can be said that citizen participation in South Korea has not reached the level of maturity – on both citizens and government’s end – to perform effective collaborative governance.

There are some exceptional cases where policy decisions were made by local referendums, which happen when a society is in the fifth phase of ‘Empower.’ The Free School Lunch Policy in primary and secondary schools and the merging of the Old Yeosu City and Yecheon City/County are some of those few examples. Despite the potential to readily achieve a more matured and empowered participatory democracy, the South Korean Government is trying to enter the third phase of ‘Involve’ by employing various smart devices and applications, including the *Sinmungo*<sup>1</sup> website ([www.epeople.go.kr](http://www.epeople.go.kr)) which is to integrate all communication channels of public administration. While these new channels are anticipated to deal with the overall function of administrative interaction with citizens (including petitions, policy proposals, and discussion boards), they are still led by a top-down approach and are only partially applied in the policy decision-making process. The characteristics and management of the current communication channels attempted by the government, therefore, does not enable citizens to have a strong voice in the actual enforcement and evaluation of public policy, nor those it encourage proactive civic engagement in the first place.

## **2.2 Literature Review on the Current phase of South Korea’s Citizen Participation.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Sinmungo* means “big drum”, which was an instrument and system of handling complaints against the government during the Joseon Dynasty. The *Sinmungo* is historically considered as the first type of participatory platform in governmental affairs.

Recent research that has focused on the third phase of citizen participation ('Involve') explain the following phenomenon as the underlying cause: 1) the influence of emergent social media based on the increasing usage of the smart devices that has become an integral component of everyday life, and 2) the meaning and the influence of citizens' participation in overall political procedures (Kum & Cho, 2010). Some local governments have shown profound interest in citizen participation by analyzing how civic engagement would work in a specific policy process. Seoul Metropolitan Government, for example, has made urban redevelopment plans for deteriorating neighborhoods by implementing a participatory system, such as surveys and public hearings. Likewise, local government interests in citizen participation are increasingly growing accordingly as democracy and local self-government are developing (Yang & Kim, 2011).

However, a number of research also point out the limitations of citizen participation through smart devices and online platforms (internet and social media). First of all, citizen participation through such methods is limitedly adopted in the stage of Policy Agenda. The overall policy process is executed in five stages: Policy Agenda Setting, Policy Formulation, Policy Adoption, Policy Implementation, and Policy Evaluation (Anderson, 2014). The ideal direction of civic engagement is when people can participate in each stage of the policy process without any restrictions. In reality, however, expressing public opinion is only made possible in the beginning of the policy process. Public officials, as policy enforcers, have generally shown a passive attitude to adopt new technologies for enhanced communication platforms compared to the private sector. This inclination also shows stark similarity of those who used to work during authoritarian and centralized government era. They are relatively not good at adapting and keeping up with the fast pace of technology change and smart devices; as a result, emergent citizen participation platforms using smart technologies could not be highlighted in the policy process (Lee, Cha, & Hong, 2008). According to Yang and Kim's research on citizen participation in the urban planning process in Seoul, the authors pointed out several drawbacks of civic engagement in the current policy making

process: 1) citizen participation was superficial since it was perfunctorily done only after the plan was already completed, 2) the methods and platforms to participate were far too simplistic and passive to express opinions adequately and in an elaborative manner, 3) information for the public to understand and analyze policies were not readily or sufficiently made available, 4) there was not enough administrative efforts and support systems to facilitate citizen participation, and 5) the general public was indifferent in participating or even learning about policy issues (2011).

Despite the lack of effort or enthusiasm on the government's end to facilitate effective and collaborative citizen participation, Ryu pointed out that the role of the government and public officials are still very important to ensure citizen participation in the public policymaking process (2013). She asserted that the main agent who can facilitate civic engagement should be the government, not citizens themselves. Considering Ryu's background in working with governmental institutions, her conclusions may reflect the strong tendencies of government affiliates to be in alignment with government-led perspectives. These perspectives seem unavoidable considering the historical characteristics of economic development in South Korea, which are rooted in and led by centralized enforcement. However, the "era of governance" is not synonymous with the "era of government," therefore it is important to facilitate collaborative and collective governance among the public and private sector rather than continuing on with government-driven relationships (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

## **2.3 Being 'Involved' through Online Participation: the U.S. and South Korea**

The Obama Administration has emphasized the importance of having an "open government" since President Obama's inauguration in 2009. In his inauguration speech, Obama made a clear point that ensuring openness, better communication, and public participation would be prioritized under his administration.

“My Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government.”

President Obama, 01/21/2009

The Obama Administration has led people to engage and express their opinions in all stages of the policy decision-making process, from the initial ‘Policy Agenda Setting’ to the final stage of ‘Policy Evaluation,’ and has employed various communication channels to obtain public feedback and opinions.

In South Korea, the current Park Administration also claimed to propel the ‘Government 3.0’ paradigm, which would build more trust and reliability of the government through 1) disclosure of administrative information, 2) vigorous collaboration among governmental departments, and 3) customized services for individual citizens. The Administration increased its public presence by becoming more accessible and approachable through various social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Kakaostory<sup>2</sup> to effectively connect citizens with the government. However, the communication flow of such platforms was not truly interactive; it was more of a one-sided announcement by the government rather than being an online space where citizens could freely express their opinions and concerns to the government. Through these social media channels, the Blue House merely released the latest news published from their own perspectives to its subscribers. The official website of the Blue House ([www.president .go.kr](http://www.president.go.kr)) has only one submenu titled as ‘Free Board’ for citizens to post their ideas and grievances (2016). It is clearly underused, with less than ten hits per post and almost no replies or subsequent discussion threads from Blue House

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<sup>2</sup> A social networking service that is especially popular in South Korea.

representatives or other citizens (there are approximately 40 to 100 posts made daily). In 2015, the Blue House website had a few other submenus for citizen participation such as *Sinmungo* and ‘Citizen Debate,’ although the two did not essentially function as an effective participatory platform. For instance, *Sinmungo* was more of a Q&A page to explain governmental and technical terminologies, while the ‘Citizen Debate’ had a rather inefficient and restricted structure that allowed citizens to only write short comments on the six topics that were already selected by the Blue House. The comments were posted in a chronological order, therefore it was difficult to distinguish which post or topic had the most online discussion activity or received the most support from other citizen participants.

As for the Obama Administration, one of the noticeable communication channels is <We the people><sup>3</sup>, an online platform for petitions. The purpose of this website is to ensure the right to petition which is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Since 2011, <We the people> provided a new way to petition and urge the Obama Administration to take action on a range of important issues. Anybody over the age of thirteen can register one’s petitions online, and if a petition receives more than 150 signatures in thirty days it can be browsed publicly on the website. This threshold can prevent the overflow of nonsensical postings and thereby motivate the petitioner to be exertive to have his or her petition be taken with serious consideration. The petitions that have received more than a hundred thousand signatures are officially handled by the specific departments which are related to the petition topic, including the White House itself. Even if the petition seems absurd or pointless (for instance, making any senseless claims against certain individuals), as long as the petition received signatures over the certain threshold the Administration has a responsibility to respond and take any sort of relevant action. The responses that are made into legislative enactments or have influenced any changes in governmental affairs are

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://Petitions.whitehouse.gov>.

sometimes documented by President Obama. The official responses or action taken for the petitions are published on the website, in addition to being mailed to the original petitioner and other supporters that have signed the petition or have made petitions under a similar topic.

The aforementioned *Sinmungo* (or E-People<sup>4</sup> in English) from the South Korean government is meant to serve a similar function as <We the people>. As one of the earliest forms and attempts of a grassroots communicative platform during the Joseon Dynasty, *Sinmungo*, which means “big drum,” was to have the grievances of the public be heard to the king. Inspired by the original *Sinmungo*, the purpose of the *Sinmungo* website is to provide a platform for the citizens to post any grievances they may have by accepting petitions, suggestions for policy alternatives or solutions, and reporting corruption. It also allows foreign residents of South Korea to have their voices be heard by enabling twelve different language options in submitting petitions, including Japanese, Vietnamese, Bengali, and Uzbek. Such diverse language options are one of the stronger advantages *Sinmungo* has compared to <We the people>, where English is the only available option. However, the constraint of the *Sinmungo* website is obvious when viewed from the perspective of citizen participation. For instance, submitting petitions are only treated as individual cases and not as a communal; as a result, petitions are directly sent to the computer server instead of being made available for public viewing on the website. Furthermore, government employees in charge of handling petitions are only able to read the petition contents; in other words there is no opportunity for them to know and analyze the tendency of public opinions, sentiments, and thoughts. Hence, the process of the *Sinmungo* website do not lead to solidarity among people, building a sense of community, and sharing of experiences with others, and as a result in participants become more like fragmented individuals rather than members of a democratic society. Once a petition is registered on the *Sinmungo* website, the petitioner receives three kinds of e-mail. The first e-mail is

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.epeople.go.kr>.

an automatic response sent to notify that the petition was successfully registered, followed by a second email confirming whether the department selected by the petitioner to resolve the issue is correctly designated or not (the petition will be relayed to the right department if this is not the case, which will end up delaying the overall response to the petition). The third and final e-mail is the “response” from the governmental department who went through the petition; which is more often than not, a mechanical response which discourages people to follow up or post any future petitions. Such perfunctory procedure and responses would become an impediment to truly achieve the openness and interactive communication as intended by the new governmental system.

## **2.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of the ‘Involve’ phase**

The proliferation of smart devices, which maximizes mobility and instantaneity, has the ability to effectively facilitate active interaction among users. Consequently, both public and private sector have actively sought to create a well-established smart media environment to utilize smart devices as significant communicational platforms. The Park Administration has focused on developing various mobile applications and programs to communicate with citizens and facilitate their involvement in public affairs. Because of the ubiquitous nature of smart devices in South Korea, these governmental mobile applications were anticipated to enhance communicative interaction between public officials and the general public, without being restricted to physical space and time. The ideal results are as followed: 1) the improved quality of services provided for citizens, 2) enhanced citizen participation, and 3) a more transparent and efficient administrative process. On the contrary, in reality most of these applications, developed by the government only serve informative purposes, such as providing government-hosted or sponsored festival schedules and introducing tourist attractions. These applications did not fulfill their intended roles to encourage citizen participation, and moreover received poor reception and download rates despite the amount of budget involved



in their development and promotion. 77% of governmental applications, created either by central or local government, had more informative features than communicative or interactive platforms, and 60% of the overall applications were barely downloaded by the public (Kim & Shim, 2013).

Contents Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Information about News	12	10.2
Civil Service	2	1.7
Information for Daily life	79	66.9
Entertainment	9	7.6
Expertise	16	13.6
Total	118	100.0

Source: Analysis of Customer Reviews on Public Apps through Semantic Network Analysis (Kim & Shim, 2013)

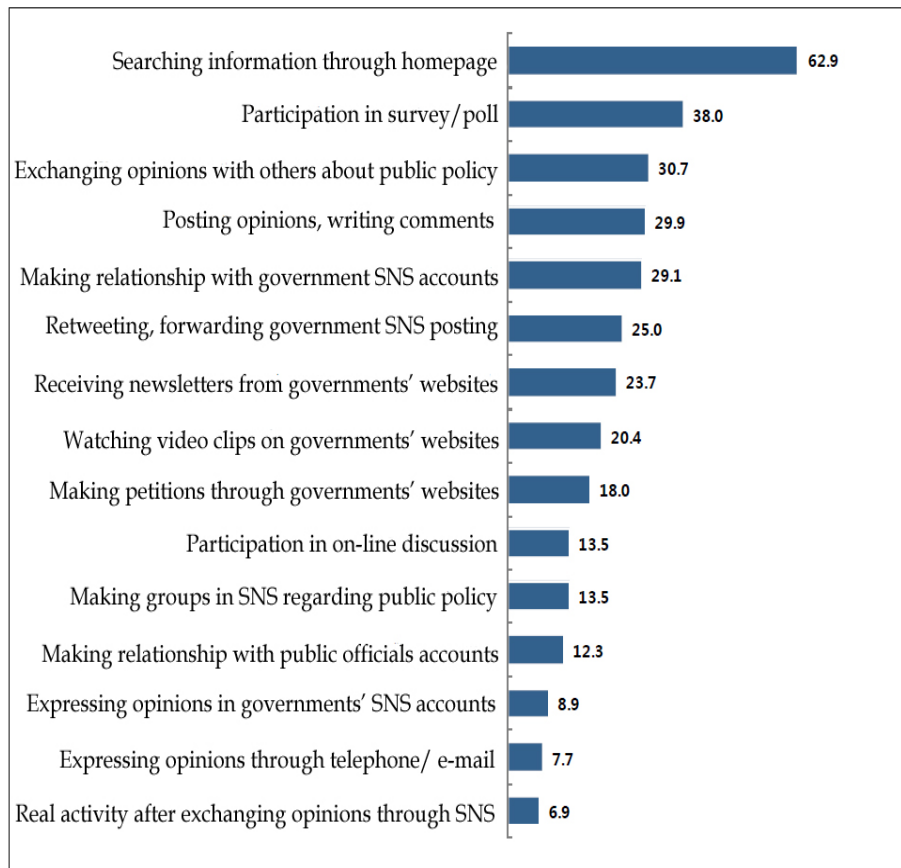
**Table 3 Content Types of Applications developed by the central government.**

The Number of Downloads	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Null	71	60.2
Less than 1,000	17	14.4
1,000 ~ 5,000	16	13.6
5,000 ~ 10,000	1	0.8
10,000 ~ 50,000	10	8.5
50,000 ~ 100,000	1	0.8
More than 100,000	2	1.7
Total	118	100.0

Source: Analysis of Customer Reviews on Public Apps through Semantic Network Analysis (Kim & Shim, 2013)

**Table 4 The Number of Downloaded Applications developed by the central government**

Besides mobile applications, there are other various communication channels that have the potential to effectively assemble public opinion and interact with users, such as Twitter, Facebook, personal websites and blogs. However, research shows that citizen participation through these social networking services (SNS) is surprisingly more limited than anticipated.



Source: <A Study of SNS Usage and Policy Participation Development in Smart Media Environment> (Lee et al, 2012)

**Figure 1 The Experiences of Participation regarding Public Policies**

According to Figure 1, citizen participation through SNS still remain as one-sided and passive; most of their 'participatory' activities are limited to information browsing, online surveys, writing comments (both substantial and insignificant), and following governmental SNS accounts. (Pro)active movements, such as being involved in policy debates creating study groups to understand public policies, and expressing questions, complaints or concerns are rarely done.

To encourage proactive citizen participation, it is crucial to have various platforms that are organized through a bottom-up approach and managed autonomously by the citizens themselves, and it is only through such platforms that active collaboration between public officials, as policymakers, and the public, as

policy beneficiaries, can be effectively achieved and sustained.

### **3. The ‘Collaborative’ phase in the U.S.**

#### **3.1 The Necessity of the ‘Collaborative’ phase**

As mentioned earlier, the IAP2 identifies ‘Collaborative’ as the fourth phase in citizen participation. To summarize, the first phase ‘Inform’ is far from perfect, with information provided one-sidedly by the government and opportunities for citizen participation extremely limited. Public opinion gradually makes its presence into the policy process in the second phase of ‘Consult,’ whereby the government makes preliminary efforts to collect public opinion on specific issues in accordance with administrative necessity to secure legitimacy and rationality in moving forward with policy formulation. It is not until the third phase of ‘Involve’ when the voices of people start to gain some autonomy; however, the restrictive structure and limited options made available by the government-led communication channels prohibit citizens to have a collective force in public affairs.

Unlike the previous phases, the fourth phase of ‘Collaborative’ involves new non-governmental actors in the policy arena; including civic organizations consisted of private businesses. These civic organizations can enhance community spirit, contribute in formulizing a mature civic culture for democratic progress, and encourage the public to become important agents in the policy process. Each individual who becomes a member of a civic organization advances from being a fragmented and powerless individual to an affiliate of a stronger collective identity due to the shared values, philosophy, and organizational membership; such organizations can be elevated to form partnerships on an equivalent level to the government to carry out collaborative governance.

#### **3.2 Case Example: the ‘Collaborative’ phase in the U.S.**

##### **3.2.1 Challenge.gov**

Challenge.gov is a good case example of civic engagement in the early stages of the fourth phase. According to the GOVLAB, a non-profit organization dedicated to improve people's quality of life, the General Services Administration (GSA) launched Challenge.gov in July 2010 "... in response to an Obama Administration memo tasking the agency with building a platform that allowed entrepreneurs, innovators, and the public to discuss novel solutions on tough problems provided by concerned governmental departments."<sup>5</sup> The statement, which is shown on the beginning of the webpage "A Partnership between the public and the government to solve important challenges," encapsulates the purpose of *Challenge.gov*. It has conducted nearly 700 challenges under a variety of topics, including science, multimedia, technology, and ideation, followed by unprecedented rate of citizen participation. As of today, there are around 13 ongoing challenges from various departments, including the Agency for International Development and the Department of Defense, with various prizes made available for public participants (Challenge.gov, 2015). The proposed solutions by citizens vary in degree, from simple idea suggestions by individuals to substantial recommendations produced by months of academic research or experimentation. Each challenge has its own approach to communicate with public participants; for instance, it may host offline seminars to provide specific information, or webinars to share ideas among participants.

Challenge.gov is evaluated as an open platform that facilitates citizens to contribute their creative ideas, which in turn enables public officials to widen their horizons and increase civic engagement in the policy process. It stands out from preexisting, unilateral approaches in that it demonstrates the power of collaborative synergy in problem solving by encouraging innovative solutions from outside the government, which has shown that overcoming challenges can be far more effective when public officials are not considered as the sole experts in the field. Because of the successful outcomes, Challenge.gov was awarded the 2013

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<sup>5</sup> See [www.thegovlab.org](http://www.thegovlab.org).

Innovations in American Government Award out of more than 600 nominations.

Nonetheless, even the seemingly perfect Challenge.gov also has its shortcomings in that it is still managed as a top-down approach, and the challenges or problems are brought up and selected by governmental departments. Moreover, those who are marginalized from smart technologies, such as seniors or lower-income minorities, are hardly given nor are they aware of such opportunities to share their opinions. Hence, in order to represent all population groups in the endeavor for collaborative governance, participatory platforms must be developed to include emergent, digital, and traditional forms of communication.

### **3.2.2 AmericaSpeaks**

AmericaSpeaks was a more matured version and example of the fourth phase in collaborative citizen participation which overcame the limitations of Challenge.gov. Founded in 1995 and lasted until 2014, AmericaSpeaks was an online platform for civic engagement managed by a nonprofit under the same name. AmericaSpeaks It has connected over 160,000 people in more than 50 large-scale forums hosted in 50 states. AmericaSpeaks' mission was to have citizens produce innovative ideas and policies, voice solidarity under shared core values, and to enhance public voice in local and federal government<sup>6</sup>. Ultimately, it pursued to renew democratic values through the development of national infrastructures for democratic deliberation and citizen engagement. To make its collaborative governance efforts more effective and efficient, AmericaSpeaks has instituted a distinctive and prominent system called the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting, which was based on video-dialogues and an online deliberative format. The Town Meeting employed the most updated technologies to promote vigorous and interactive communication with the public, from video conferences to online voting.

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://participedia.net/organizations/AmericaSpeaks>.

### **i ) The 21<sup>st</sup> Country Town Meeting.**

The 21st Century Town Meeting focuses on discussions and deliberations among citizens, rather than employing the format of speeches, Q&A sessions or panel presentations. Anyone who has an interest in the proposed issues could convene voluntarily in a designated space and discuss the issues in small focus groups alongside with expert facilitators to come up with innovative and creative ideas. The purpose of the Town Meeting was to gather diverse perspectives and to deliberate in depth about main policy issues. The discussions and results from each group were then compiled into a dataset and made accessible through the smart devices located in the center of the hall. Each group submitted their own ideas and individually voted on specific proposals using the devices provided by AmericaSpeaks. The technology enabled idea submission and voting to happen on a real-time basis and within a few minutes the results from the discussions are analyzed and announced to all the participants. The final recommendation selected by the participants was then proposed to policymakers, from members of congress to administrative personnel. In all 50 states, these approaches have produced fruitful public discussions which have led to voluntary actions and positive changes in the policy process.

### **ii) Satellite-based video teleconferencing**

Since 1998, a satellite-based video teleconferencing system was used by the AmericaSpeaks; to link several meeting places at one time for political discussions. Over the years, AmericaSpeaks has tried multi-site video conferences with satellite-linked formats, and has shown the potential possibilities of using Google Hangout to manage such multi-site discussions with the public.

The topics brought up by citizens through AmericaSpeaks' SNS channels such as Facebook and Twitter, were chosen by AmericaSpeaks and then brought up at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Meeting. AmericaSpeaks was also one of the first organizations who weaved online discussion together with face-to-face interaction,

making it a more accessible platform for all population groups possible. It has accomplished a wide range of topics, from daily issues to national affairs, in constructive and meaningful ways.

### **iii) Case Study – Ground Zero**

The Ground Zero Project was organized to discuss about how to reconstruct the World Trade Centers which were destroyed by the September 11 attack in 2001. Initial proposals for rehabilitation have received poor public reception, which made community and nonprofit organizations to step up in the discussion. Aware of the numerous competing claims being made for the Ground Zero Project, in July 2002, the <*Listening to the City*> forum was held at the Javits Center in New York City, attended by more than almost 4,300 local citizens. Decision-makers from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation also participated to listen to the discussions. After a full day of intensive discussions, participants concluded that the initial plan for the rehabilitation of the World Trade Center did not satisfy the actual needs of the citizens. Within a week since the inception of <*Listening to the City*>, decision-makers confirmed that the project would be revised in accordance with people's opinions.

For more than 19 years, the AmericaSpeaks has involved U.S. citizens in the country's most critical issues, including the Ground Zero Project, the post-Katrina revitalization plan of New Orleans, the U.S. budget deficit, and healthcare reform in California. Some of these strenuous efforts managed to have a breakthrough in adopting tough policies, and actively engaged the citizens to be an integral part of the policy-making process. While funding difficulties exacerbated by the recession made the organization to cease its operations, AmericaSpeaks remains to be a significant case example of a nonpartisan platform where the value and potential for integrating public deliberation into policymaking are successfully demonstrated (Goldman, 2014). Furthermore, it also showed how well-designed public deliberations can overcome diverging opinions and make meaningful changes in

the policy process (Williamson, 2007).

### **3.3 Limitations of the ‘Collaborative’ phase in the U.S.**

The two case examples in the U.S. give important takeaways on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing platforms to facilitate active citizen participation. For Challenges.gov, being available only through ICT-based services and smart devices clearly shows its limitations. First of all, the sheer volume of information on the Internet and the difficulties in managing them make it extremely difficult for the general public to discern issues of urgency or high priority. Second, marginalized groups who cannot afford to use smart devices, such as the elderly, disabled, lower-income, and immigrant groups, are not able to participate and therefore have the risk of being severely underrepresented in overall policy discussions. Lastly, due to its fast-paced and transient nature, it is not convenient nor is it generally encouraged for people to have in-depth discussions when everything is done on an online platform.

While AmericaSpeaks is evaluated as a revolutionary model for promoting citizen participation and expanding direct democracy, there were some shortcomings that prevented the organization to reach a broader participation. First of all having a specific designated location and requiring a high level of commitment prohibited those who did not have the luxury to travel or take time off to join the discussions. This again brings up the continuing discussion and challenge of being inclusive of all socioeconomic groups and the potential risks of coming to policy decisions that does not sufficiently reflect those populations.

Also, funding is also a critical issue that cannot be overlooked when it comes to executing citizen participation. As shown by the case examples from AmericaSpeaks, to host such large-scale events is extremely costly. Events related to civic engagement does not generate much profit, and being a nonpartisan organization dedicated to public interest meant stringent regulations in funding streams. Thus, overcoming the barriers related to space, time, and finances are



crucial to increase and broaden the participation rate of all citizens.

## **4. New Possibilities for TV Programs to enhance Citizen Participation**

### **4.1 The Potential for Television Programs in Public Policy**

How can the limitations of online and offline platforms be overcome to enhance citizen participation for all population groups? The following section will turn to the familiar platform of television programs, in which transcends all generations in its usage and accessible to most people, and see how it can be an effective channel for citizen participation compared to online and offline platforms.

It is true that the influence of television has been significantly reduced with the development and proliferation of mobile and smart devices. This phenomenon is especially prominent among younger generations, as they are more adapted to the fast-paced changes and characteristics of these devices and related technology. Moreover, the boundary between producers and consumers of mass communication became blurred. The enhanced camera and video functions on smart devices and the development of self-editing applications and programs enable these “prosumers” to produce, consume, and distribute their own contents. This phenomenon followed by the changing nature of viewership contributes to the diminishing television average audience ratings. The increase in User Created Contents (UCC) and the ability to select and view contents without being restricted to time or location indicate an evolving and personalized viewership, which does not really correspond with the traditional viewership of television programs.

Despite these facts, it may be hasty to jump into conclusion that the influence of the broadcast televisions is obsolete. Rather, with the emergence of Internet Protocol television (IPTV) and the development of the ICT, television audiences and viewership have in fact broadened even more. In order to keep up with the increasingly selective and fast-changing preferences of viewers, television program producers and production companies, which were once in the dominant supplier

position, are very much aware to evolve accordingly with these trends and are focusing on viewer-targeted programs and the diversification of the distribution channels.

The expansion and diversification of the distribution channels is referred to as the "new media era," in which has a participatory nature in its platform. That the new media environment can facilitate people's participation in society has sufficient theoretical basis. The more available the media, the more political and social knowledge one can acquire; and the more information individuals start to acquire, the more likely efficacy of social participation can be promoted (Carpini et al, 1994). When accessible information and diverse perspectives on political and social issues are made available through the new media environment, the public would be able to acquire sufficient knowledge to discuss important policy issues, which would eventually lead to citizen participation. Therefore, information provided by the media has the power to play an important role in stimulating social debate for public goods and induce a broader public participation (Shah et al, 2001).

The nature and characteristics of television programs are changing with the evolving media landscape and the relationship between production staff and viewers are becoming increasingly interactive; in fact, audience members are regarded as essential contributors by program producers. These new trends and changing relationships are also related to changes in society where emphasis on public participation is being placed. Consequently, many participatory channels are being opened to the public by broadcast media. Furthermore, production teams and broadcasting companies are being exceptionally proactive in their communications with viewers through various SNS channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Such changes will ultimately have an impact on the governmental decision-making process.

Meanwhile, entering the 'Governance era' means that there are various key players with various opinions and value systems, and that the relationship between the government and the people is transitioning from a hierarchical to a more

horizontal one. The term 'governance' is not limited to collaboration between the government and selected groups, thus the scope is expanded to the solidarity and cooperation among all members of society. Four main players that are identified as principal agents to sustain governance: public officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), policy experts, and the private sector. However, this discourse overlooks the general public who are the de facto beneficiaries of public policy, which is the case especially in South Korea. Public participation is more reactive than proactive, and only made available unless initiated by the government.

While the technical and scientific expertise of professionals will continue to play a crucial role in solving societal problems and creating innovative solutions, it should also be noted that the public can provide a type of localized knowledge that these professionals are not aware of. Especially when it comes to public policy, it is the general citizenry who are directly affected by the policy decisions that can provide insight on what improvements should be made. Therefore, it is important for public officials and experts to be in touch with the public sentiments and provide a platform for active engagement and better governance. And it is the provision of such platforms where television can step in to fulfill the role as most people have easy access to television programs without high barriers.

In addition, television can play a role in distinguishing the degree of importance among the numerous social agendas that are being brought up in an increasingly complicated society. According to Kingdon's policy window model (1984), three 'streams' are needed for a social problem to be dealt in the public policy arena: the problem stream (whether the condition is considered a problem or not), the policy stream (whether policy alternatives exist or not), and the political stream (whether politicians are willing and able to make a policy change or not). When these three streams come together, a window of opportunity to discuss a particular social issue is opened and subsequent actions can be taken on the subject at hand. (Kingdon, 1984)

Likewise, television can play the role in explaining the policy agendas of high priority to the public, and thereby contribute in achieving collaborative governance between the government, specialists, NGOs, and the general public.

## **4.2 Case Study I: South Korea's <The 15 Minutes to Change the World>**

<The 15 Minutes to Change the World> is a television program that started in 2011 and produced by the Christian Broadcasting System (CBS) in South Korea. It is one of the notable TV programs that weave citizen participation into its programming. The program is consisted of 15 minute-long lectures by inspirational figures in all fields; many of the figures do not necessarily have celebrity-status, but are selected based on their personal and/or professional accomplishments that would inspire the general public to overcome their own fears and challenges. . Since its inception, the program has received positive reception and became a social phenomenon in South Korea, mostly because it met with the society's yearning for new knowledge. <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> was initiated to meet such a social necessity, and the influence of the program was enlarged based on the rapid dissemination and engagement through smart devices; the relatively short length of the program and its format was also apt to such devices. In the process of designing the program, the TED talks were a major inspiration.

“The desires of the people who want to learn something new are bigger than before, since they had more time to spend. So, unlike the past, I could feel the demands for intellectual lectures through the television programming were increasing. When we think about the role of the television in the past, it was mainly on delivering breaking news or providing entertainment. In other words, there was not a program which can meet audiences' desires for knowledge; that's why I paid attention to the lecture format. Furthermore, lecture programs can be utilized as a 'One Source Multi Use,' meaning that once the program is produced, it can be

utilized in several different ways, such as providing it to private companies for educational purposes, publishing books with selected contents, and so on.

Unfortunately, I've determined that the power of the cable TV platform is lapsing these days. In the past, we admitted that one of the most famous songs over the world, 'Video kills the radio stars' turned to be true; but nowadays, we can say that the 'Internet or smart devices kills the video star.' Since the iPhone and other Apple products were first introduced to the South Korean market in 2009, such smart devices became proliferated in South Korea very rapidly. More and more people are spending considerable time on their smart devices, even during breaks, when they are walking, and before going to bed.

Based on these current trend changes – people's desire for knowledge and wisdom, and the proliferation of smart devices that are becoming an integral part of people's daily lives –, I decided to make a 15minute-long, mobile-friendly program which can meet with these changes in society.”

Interview with the Chief Producer of <The 15 Minutes to Change the World>

The vision of the chief producer accurately hit the nail on the head; <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> has become very popular, with more than 650 episodes produced since June 2011. The program goes through particular broadcasting procedures, consisted of both offline conference and online distribution. Regular offline conferences are held monthly with five or six speakers, in which the 500-seat lecture space is a sold-out event in every occasion. After recording the offline conference, producers create them into separate clips, each featuring a single 15-minute lecture, and distribute them through various online and SNS channels. The number of daily hits of the Podcasts is more than 500,000, and the number of the total viewers through Youtube is more than 50 million; around 180 thousand viewers are subscribed on the program's Youtube channel subscribed to watch the latest episode. Facebook is the most prominent channel for the program, with more than 340 thousand fans, and the production team continues to expand its influence.

<The 15 Minutes to Change the World> has three unique characteristics compared to another lecture programs. First of all, its contents are localized to Korean culture and society, which means that the contents are relatable topics and the program taps into Koreans' fondness for listening to other people's life stories. Compared to TED talks which deal with a lot of academic knowledge and insight, <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> also deal with personal experiences and hardships, as well as issues that are specific to the Korean society. Such localization of the program has led to strong support and a loyal viewership.

Also, while TED speakers are primarily consisted of world-famous scholars, professionals, and celebrities, <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> also opens its platform for speakers that ordinary citizens themselves. In addition to prominent scholars or experts in specific sectors, ordinary people are also invited to convey their own stories. The producer of this program believes that anyone has their own stories that can touch the minds and heart of others; hence the program is open to anyone and everyone of all age and occupation. The reason for this can be explained by the chief producer of the program, Koo Bumjoon.

“When conceiving the program for the first time, I thought everyone had their own 15 minute-story to tell. Because, you know, we can gain various experiences and deep insights from those that are like our very own – housewives, delivery people, teachers, and so on. [...] Even if the life lessons learned from these everyday experiences may not be so spectacular or particularly intellectual, the public can sympathize with these stories. What the audience wants is not always something grandiose or exceptional. Anyone can be on the program if he or she has an idea or story which can change the world even the slightest bit, whether he or she is our next-door neighbor or a prominent scholar. That's the essence of this program.”

Interview with the Chief Producer of < The 15 Minutes to Change the World >

The last unique feature of this program is the level of engagement by the audience members. Whereas TED talks still have the characteristics of mass media in which the audience are separated from the speakers and are more or less passive reactors, <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> regards its audience as a significant factor in the production process and encourages their active involvement. The program stands out even more in terms of the audience's role, which is highlighted in the chief producer's statement below.

“<The 15 Minutes to Change the World> is different from most programs that involve audience members in their production. The offline conference is more like a fantastic festival - I mean, the audiences are not people who simply gathered for the recording but because they wanted to enjoy the lectures in person.

[...] In addition, there are many pre and post-production activities prepared for the audience, such as aerobics or posting messages on the wall. Through these activities, we can connect with the audience even after the recording ends. The audience members have expressed that they could feel a sense of community, a sentiment that cannot be generated by online platforms.”

Interview with the Chief Producer of <The 15 Minutes to Change the World>

There are four reasons for focusing on <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> as a case example to enhance citizen participation. First of all, speech-formatted program is an effective tool to express the voices of ordinary people. Compared to other programs with a set format, such as soap operas or documentaries, speech programs are relatively more accessible for the ordinary people because it does not require any professional skills to appear on the program.

Second, the program has wider distribution channels unlike any other television programs. Although this program is primarily made for broadcasting through cable television, it employs various methods so that the program can be made accessible for everyone. As mentioned earlier, the program takes advantage of YouTube and Facebook to not only disseminate and promote its episodes but also to interact with

current and potential viewers. This has been proven to be especially effective in reaching out to the younger generation, who consume programs mainly through video clips on their mobile devices or on internet. Hence, the production and programming team have actively pursued its communicative channels through the internet early on, and expanded its distribution to various SNS channels popularly used by all generations.

Third, the program has been successful in collaborating with various governmental departments, with over ten co-produced offline conferences. The lectures of these co-productions have dealt with a variety of topics, including, innovative invention, science, technology and creativity. These successful experiences may lead to more opportunities for collaborative governance and interaction between the public sector and audience members.

Last but not least, the program has many avenues for engagement with the viewers and audience members, overcoming the limitation of one-way communication that has been consistently brought up against television programming. In addition to the pre and post-conference activities, the program also gives opportunities for voluntary audience members to freely express their thoughts for 90 seconds (<The 1.5 Minutes to Change the World>.), which is a sub-event on its own. It is an innovative way to facilitate audience participation and fulfill their desires to speak their own stories on stage.

The most successful example of audience engagement was a two-day event titled as <The 15 Minutes to Change the World PAN> which was held on November 2014 in Jeju Island, Korea. As the largest event and the first global conference hosted by the program, this event invited local and foreign innovators and entrepreneurs from 12 Asian cities, who presented their own lectures and had debates on global issues. Public participants could select one topic<sup>7</sup> that they were

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<sup>7</sup> There were five topics at this event: <Life and Culture>, <Education and Learning>, <Sustainability and Purpose>, <Open Collaboration>, and <City and Community>.



interested in, and were able to be involved in group discussions during the two-day event. Finally, on the last day of the event, there was an opportunity for participants to stand on the stage and share their ideas that came up from the group discussions.



**Photo 1 <The 15Minutes to Change the World PAN>**  
(Copyright ©2014 Christian Broadcasting System, South Korea. All Rights Reserved.)

Based on these four reasons mentioned above, the following section will go over how <15 Minutes to Changes the World> has the potential to become an appropriate model to enhance citizen participation.

### **4.3 Public Policy Implications from <The 15 Minutes to Change the World>**

Innovative ideas to solve problems can come from “small ideas” and the devotion from the ordinary people. Haeji Jung,<sup>8</sup> a high school student, presented a brilliant idea to improve congested waiting lines at bus stops. The bus station where she usually commutes from is always chaotic with people waiting for the bus, especially during rush hour. She came up with the simple idea of putting waiting lines on the ground using plastic tape. Such simple idea has shown remarkable results: the waiting lines improved the way people stood in line, naturally solving the seemingly impossible congestion problem. She further implemented her idea at other bus stops. This case example has important implications for policymakers, that innovative ideas or solutions can be achieved with a small budget.



**Photo 2 Making Lines for Waiting Commuters with a Simple Idea**  
(Copyright ©2014 Christian Broadcasting System, South Korea. All Rights Reserved.)

Yoonmo Kang<sup>9</sup>, the representative of StayYoung Company, was engaged in a local election campaign to help her father who was running for city council. She

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<sup>8</sup> <The power of action to change the situation>

Speaker : Jung,Haiji (Student of paTI (Paju Typography Institute)

Broadcast Date : Dec, 29, 2014

Youtube Link : <https://youtu.be/mVYiu153Kxg>

<sup>9</sup> 424<sup>th</sup> episode <How to Make Politicians Work Properly>.

Speaker : Kang, Yoonmo (Representative of StayYoung)

Broadcast Date : May, 27, 2014

realized there were many problems in the local electoral process. Voters generally do not have the opportunity to know about the candidates of their neighborhoods; information on candidates and election campaigns were merely focused on propagating superficial images of the candidates, hence voters were not able to learn about their policy agendas and other concrete proposals. The candidates themselves also do not make efforts to communicate with the voters on substantial matters, and their campaign activities are all about providing a likable image to win the election. As a result, those who become elected officials do not make further attempts to understand and communicate with their local voters, and voters also become indifferent or cynical about politics. Sometimes, voters do not even know the names of their local candidates or are even aware of an election going on.



**Photo 3 The speaker Yoonmo Kang and the application <The Candidates of My Village>**  
**(Copyright ©2014 Christian Broadcasting System, South Korea. All Rights Reserved.)**

To solve this problem, Kang developed application software that made candidate information of all regions readily available. After the city council election, she expanded the application features by also including the activities and achievements of elected officials, as

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Youtube Link : <https://youtu.be/ktUym3NO2U8>

“As I haven’t regarded myself as someone who is interested in politics, I was not interested in the policy process as well. Policy seemed to be very far from me and I thought [including] the policy process on this application would be very bothersome and difficult to do by myself.”

Kang faced challenges with the governmental departments when creating this application, especially when requesting for approval for using information. The attitudes of the government personnel were evasive, often delegating Kang’s request to other departments without particular reason. The unreasonably complicated and tedious procedures by the government greatly discouraged her to partner with government officials and personnel in any future projects. All of what Kang experienced firsthand – the lack of information of local candidates, elections, and policy agendas, as well as the lack of collaboration on the government’s end to improve communications between elected officials and voters – are crucial lessons for public officials and policymakers alike. Once again, the importance of government to have a more open-minded and transparent attitude to information accessibility and communication is key to increase political awareness and participation from the citizens.

The two lectures from <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> show how innovative ideas can be produced from humble resources and the prevailing challenges to collaborate with government are impediments to citizen participation. Through the medium of television broadcasting, these ideas and concerns are shared broadly to the general public and also to public officials and policymakers themselves. <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> highlights the importance of having a systematic process that can introduce various ideas and induce positive communal experiences that could lead to fruition in real life.

#### **4.4 Case Study II: the Success of Palestine’s Citizen Participation through broadcasting programs**

Palestine is one of the most conflictive areas in the world, especially since the relationship between Israel and Palestine has become extremely complicated regarding its territorial ownership. Despite all odds, Palestine has made strenuous efforts and has shown remarkable outcomes in citizen participation in the policymaking process. In particular, the activities of Search for Common Ground (hereafter referred to as SFCG), have facilitated civic engagement through broadcasting programs, including television and radio. SFCG has a partnership with Ma'an Network, which is the local Palestinian News Agency with a network of local TV stations that cover all Palestinian Territories. The Ma'an Network was in charge of organizing, producing, and distributing all program contents<sup>10</sup>. It strived to create an interactive reality TV show and an eyewitness radio program that could inform the importance of the civic engagement and participation. The Network arranged televised town hall meetings across the country, in which citizens could directly participate in the discussion of critical issues.

The results and the influence of these discussions are noteworthy. The interactive reality TV program was aired successfully as planned, and it reached at least 750,000 active viewers across the Palestine Territories, Southern Europe, and Northern Africa. The eyewitness radio program was also a success, producing more than 300 episodes with and more than 1.2 million listeners. The televised town hall meetings had more than 1,800 citizens in attendance, discussing critical issues on the environment, labor law, natural resources, health, infrastructure, child labor, gender discrimination, and the lack of government support to farmers.

According to the evaluation report on "Strengthening Citizen Participation on Critical Social Issues to Prevent Conflict" written by Alpha International, and commissioned by SFCG, there are two main objectives behind these endeavors. The first objective was to strengthen a constructive relationship between citizens and local elite groups to discuss critical local issues. The other objective is to create

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<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Alpha-Final-SFCG-Evaluation-Report-DUTCH-GRANT-2015.docx>

social tools for citizen participation in policymaking procedures. Local authorities also participated in the broadcasted town hall meetings to hear citizens' voices, leading to mutual understanding of the issues at hand and also what are the most pressing concerns for the citizens. Based on the Alpha International survey, , the projects were a success in that "an absolute 100% of the leaders who participated in the radio show or in the town hall meeting believe that their participation in either of these two programs was a useful mechanism for learning about the priorities of their citizens." In the case of Palestine, broadcast programs and televised town hall meetings were useful tools in both encouraging active citizen participation and enhancing communication with public officials in policymaking procedures.

In addition, the broadcasting program had positive effects on the citizens' stance on democratic participation. According to the Alpha International survey, 73% of the respondents believed that public dialogue was a valuable tool for solving conflicts in their communities. 91.4% of the respondents in survey also regarded dialogue through the format of reality TV was an innovative method to engage in social issues. The popularity and easy access to broadcasting programs have also contributed to the successful dissemination of political issues and promotion of participatory opportunities.

The evaluators from Alpha International concluded that the broadcasting programs aired through television and radio were not only effective, but it was also a valuable resource for Palestinians to be enlightened on current political situations and be innovative and proactive in their own rights. Moreover, the town hall meetings were very successful tools to make real changes within the society, since participants could directly present their opinions in front of the local authorities. It was also a great opportunity for local governments to hear the voices of the people and to make better policies based on people's needs.

The two case studies each highlighted the potential as well as proven success of television programming in playing a significant role in effectively spreading the social agenda to a broader audience and reaping positive change in society. The example of Palestine made the case that broadcast programs could be more useful

than online-based channels, as the heavy reliance on ICT on the latter cannot effectively reach to some of the most underprivileged groups who cannot keep up with the rapid technological changes in society. In other words, television programs can and still are serving as an influential medium for the public. As long as the prevailing limitations or risk of being one-sided can be overcome, television programs are anticipated to play important roles in the area of citizen participation. With the advantages derived from the characteristics of the broadcast programming, shared values can transcend into collective action that would change the world to a better place based on the real voices from real people.

## 5. Conclusion

This study is about the current status of South Korea's citizen participation, what is preventing it from advancing to true collaborative governance, and how communicative platforms can be improved or achieved to reach these goals. It first investigated how the evolution of citizen participation depends on the willingness to collaborate by the government and the type of communication platforms made available, using examples from South Korea and the U.S.. It showed that, in contrast to general perception, online participation for civic engagement has limitations in terms of accessibility and reliability; therefore, this study proposed to consider broadcast and television programming as an alternative method to overcome the shortcomings of online participation. As a mass media platform, television has wide accessibility despite its diminishing influence in the smart phone era. To reiterate, television programs has the potential to be an alternative medium that could compensate for the limitations of the online participation. South Korea's <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> was provided as a case study of how it overcomes the limitations of traditional television programs by facilitating interactive relationship between program producers and audience members and making the program accessible on various SNS channels. <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> encouraged citizens to freely express their ideas and stories, and made them as well as the general public realize how much their voice matters.

The successful marriage of citizen participation, collaborative governance, and broadcast programming as exemplified in Palestine's case has important implications for programs like <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> to step up their potential in enhancing citizen participation in South Korea. It shows that in order to resolve the deeply rooted and complex problems of society, one cannot simply rely on public officials and policy experts for solutions. As shown in the case of Palestine, public officials in South Korea must embrace and actively seek diverse and localized knowledge as well as the simple yet innovative ideas by the general public. Also, producers of the broadcast programming should consider how



population groups of all socioeconomic statuses can participate and be represented in the public policy arena. In short, the willingness to collaborate by elected officials and inclusive platforms for all citizenry are key criteria to produce policy that truly benefit the people.

There are three recommendations for the South Korean government to encourage citizen participation and for television programs like <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> to become effective facilitators for engagement. First, it is important to find ways to enlarge the range of participants and their influence. To make this happen, people should feel encouraged that their voice carries weight in creating policy, and the government should continue to communicate with the people in all stages of the policy process to show how much public opinion was indeed reflected and applied in decision-making procedures.

Second, rather than being passive recipients of information, citizens must also be given the opportunity to actively participate in the policy process. . As shown in the examples by AmericaSpeaks and <The 15 Minutes to Change the World>, there are many ways to combine and integrate different channels and smart technology to ensure a broader participation by all groups.

Finally, it is necessary to give appropriate compensation for outstanding ideas, which would motivate citizen participation even further. Just like how the incentives provided by <Challenge.gov> has led to substantial policy recommendations and innovative ideas by the public, programs like <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> in South Korea can also employ similar strategies to encourage a more proactive citizen engagement and for the government to recognize how truly powerful these “small ideas” could be. Such incentives could in turn transform into more mature collaborative governance in policymaking,

In sum, citizen participation, despite its critiques, is crucial for the efficient operation of the state, and necessary for the qualitative development of democracy. To overcome the limitations of online participation and smart devices, this paper focused on the potential of television and broadcast programming for civic engagement. As long as the government, policymakers, program producers, and

general public collaborate together, programs like <The 15 Minutes to Change the World> can become powerful avenues ‘by the people, for the people, and of the people’.

There is a proverb in South Korea; “One step of ten persons is better than ten steps of one person”. This means that if we walk together for the better future, the world will be changed to a better place. Instead of walking ten steps ahead, now is the time for the government to walk one step on the same page with its citizens.

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## 국문 초록

민주주의가 발전하면서 국가 및 도시 행정 각 분야에서 시민들의 참여는 촉진되고 강화되는 방향으로 전개되어 왔다. 이러한 현상은 정책을 수립하고 집행하는 과정에서도 나타나고 있는데, 정책의 대상이 되는 시민들의 의견과 요구를 적절하게 반영하는 것이 보다 효과적인 정책 수립 방향이라 여겨지기 때문이다.

우리나라 역시 이러한 방향성과 크게 다르지 않은데, ‘정부 3.0’으로 대변되는 정부 운영의 패러다임은 개방된 공공정보를 바탕으로 국민과의 소통을 강화하고 나아가 국민들을 정책 결정과 평가의 주체로 세우고자 하는 정부의 의지를 드러내고 있다. 이를 구체화하기 위한 여러 방안 중 하나로 각 지방자치단체 및 중앙 정부가 주도하는 다양한 인터넷 사이트와 스마트기기용 어플리케이션이 개발 및 출시되었다.

언뜻 보면, 세계 수위(首位)를 다투는 우리나라의 정보통신 환경을 고려해보았을 때 인터넷을 이용한 국민들의 참여 확대는 매우 효율적이고 용이할 것으로 보인다. 그러나 인터넷 사이트와 스마트기기 어플리케이션의 구성 열개 및 시민과의 커뮤니케이션 흐름(flow) 특성을 분석한 결과, 쌍방향성 소통을 지향하는 기존의 목표와는 달리, 여전히 일방향적인 흐름을 보이고 있었다.

이에 비해 오랜 참여민주주의의 역사를 지닌 미국의 경우, 시민들은 인터넷을 통해 정책 결정 및 평가 과정에 적극적으로 참여한다. <We the people>, <Americaspeaks> 등 다양한 사이트들이 주체의 민관을 가리지 않고 시민들의 참여를 촉진하기 위해 그 역할을 다하고 있다. 그러나 시민들의 참여가 활성화된 미국에서도, 온라인 매체가 가질 수밖에 없는 한계인 접근성 accessibility와 신뢰성 reliability은 존재한다.



온라인 매체는 고유의 특성 상, 세대 및 소득 수준에 따라 그 접근성이 다르며 따라서 온라인 매체를 통한 의견 표출은 그 강도 및 내용에서 왜곡이 발생할 수 있다. 또한 ‘정보의 홍수’라는 표현이 대변하듯, 무분별하게 분출되는 방대한 정보 속에 그 사실 여부 및 옥석을 가려내는 것이 용이하지만은 않다.

온라인이 지닌 접근성과 신뢰성의 한계를 보완할 수 있는 도구로서, 고전적 대중 매체인 TV 방송에 주목할 필요가 있다. TV방송은 ‘mass media’라는 수사(修辭)에 걸맞게 높은 접근성을 가지고 있으며, 동시에 언론매체로서의 신뢰성을 확보하고 있다. 물론 인터넷의 빠른 성장을 거치며 대중매체로서의 TV가 그 영향력을 상실해가고 있다는 평가가 존재하는 것이 사실이다. 그러나 유튜브, 페이스북을 비롯해 고전적 채널을 넘어선 유비쿼터스적인 채널 확대, 시청자와의 쌍방향 커뮤니케이션 강화 등, 최근 일부 프로그램들이 보이는 발 빠른 변화는 인터넷 시대와의 시너지 효과를 기대하게 한다.

따라서 TV 프로그램이 가진 접근성과 신뢰성의 바탕 위에, 시대적 변화에 대처하는 변화가 수반된다면 시민들의 참여를 장려할 수 있는 통로로 기능할 수 있을 것으로 기대된다. 실제 팔레스타인 영토 내에서 제작된 TV쇼와 라디오 프로그램이 정치적 영역에 있어서 시민 참여를 증진하는데 크게 기여하였음을 증명한 바 있다.

따라서 본 연구는, 현재 한국의 시민참여가 어떠한 방식으로 이루어지고 있는지를 살펴보고, 온라인 시민 참여가 활성화되어 있는 미국의 사례를 분석한 후, 그 한계를 분석하고자 하였다. 또한 TV 프로그램이 그 한계를 보완할 수 있는 대안적 매체로서 자리매김할 수 있음을 제시하고, 시민들의 참여와 소통이 비교적 용이한 구체적인 포맷으로서 강연 프로그램이 그 역할을 할 수 있음을 제안하였다, 특히 시대적 변화에 가장 빠르게 대처한 프로그램 중 하나인 <세상을 바꾸는

시간, 15분>의 사례 분석을 통해 평범한 시민들이 가진 아이디어가 어떻게 세상을 바꾸는 정책으로 기능할 수 있는지를 보여주고, 쌍방향 커뮤니케이션의 가능성을 분석하였다. 이를 바탕으로 TV프로그램을 통해 정책결정 과정에서 시민들의 참여가 어떻게 이루어질 수 있는지 그 가능성을 진단해본다.

**주요어 :** 시민 참여, TV 프로그램, citizen participation, 정책 제안,  
세바시, 세상을바꾸는시간15분

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